



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act

House Republicans' top priority, the Lower Energy Costs Act, will reverse the Biden administration's attacks on affordable energy and provide much-needed relief for families struggling to fill their gas tanks and pay utility bills. Below are the provisions passed through the Committee on Natural Resources.

Topline Points

- Spurs **increased production** of domestic energy.
- **Maximizes efficiency and minimizes delays** for hardrock mining projects on federal land by extending existing permitting efficiencies to mineral development and limiting claims on mine projects to those filed within 120 days of a final agency action.
- Modernizes the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to **foster project development across all sectors** without sacrificing environmental standards or public involvement.

Background

Facing historically high energy prices and inflation, families across the country are on the front lines of dealing with the Biden administration's failed policies. The Energy Information Administration predicts a 50 percent increase in global energy consumption by 2050, while global demand for minerals necessary for defense, smart phones and renewable energy technology is increasing exponentially. An all-of-the-above approach to domestic energy and mining is the best way to support the energy needs of American families and meet our technological and national security needs.

The NEPA process remains a significant barrier for transportation, infrastructure, energy development, transmission lines, wildfire prevention, and drought resilience projects. The current permitting process is filled with repetitive, duplicative assessments and prolonged processing, making it difficult for developers to plan and build projects efficiently.

The Transparency, Accountability, Permitting and Production of (TAPP) American Resources Act will bring outdated regulations into the 21st Century, provide clear timelines and certainty, and unlock the power of American innovation. This kind of predictability will prevent current and future administrations from keeping businesses and workers in permitting limbo, and will strengthen our national security by securing supply chains and pulling production, refining, and processing capabilities away from China and back to the U.S. This all-of-the-above approach will put America back where we belong: the global leader in energy development and deployment of innovative technologies.

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Key legislative provisions include:

- Requires the Department of the Interior (DOI) to follow the law and immediately **resume quarterly lease sales on federal lands**, and requires a minimum of four lease sales per year in onshore states with eligible lands.
- Requires the **publication of the 2023-2028 plan** for offshore oil and gas lease sales and sets deadlines for publishing future five-year plans.
- **Repeals harmful royalties and fee increases** imposed on energy production.
- Ensures parity in **energy revenue sharing** for states with onshore and offshore energy development.
- Requires DOI to **publish information online and report to Congress** regarding the processing of onshore and offshore drilling and exploration permits, nominated parcels for lease, leases won, and usage of Applications for Permit to Drill (APD) fees.
- Requires DOI to process APDs under a valid existing lease, **regardless of any unrelated civil action**.
- **Ends the existing moratorium** on new coal leasing.
- Reforms NEPA to **streamline federal permitting** for all sectors of the economy.
- Requires that certain low-impact activities and activities in previously studied areas on public lands are **not major federal actions under NEPA**. This applies to all kinds of energy projects and includes activities such as geotechnical investigations, transmission infrastructure upgrades, off-road vehicle use in existing rights-of-way, meteorological towers, and geothermal exploratory wells.
- Allows the Secretary of the Interior to accept non-federal funding to pay for dedicated staff and technology upgrades **to expedite permits**.
- Clarifies that environmental reviews for lease sales should be **limited to impacts directly related** to that sale.
- Imposes a **120-day deadline** on filing litigation on final agency actions concerning energy and mining projects, and a 120-day deadline to file a claim on any final agency action subject to NEPA.
- Sets **deadlines for completion of NEPA review** at one year for environmental assessments and two years for environmental impact statements, unless a deadline extension is agreed to by the project sponsor.
- Amends existing criteria to **prevent the unilateral exclusion of uranium** from future consideration as a critical mineral.